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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1939.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "TIPS FOR FOOD SHOPPERS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S.D.A. and the Consumers' Counsel, A.A.A.

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The news today is for the family food-shopper. It's news for the lady who plans the meals and does the marketing. It's news about supplies and prices of seasonal foods.

The news in general is the same as it was two weeks ago--plenty of food. The food crops of 1939 taken altogether are larger than any year during the 10 years before the drought of 1934. The grain crops this year that are larger than average are wheat, rye, buckwheat and rice. Though the white potato crop is rather small, the very large sweetpotato crop makes up for it. Other big crops this year are dried beans, peanuts, sugar beets, sugarcane, almonds, walnuts, apples, pears, grapes, oranges and grapefruit. More dried fruits than usual will be on the market this year, and more canned fruits than last year. The fall vegetable crops have been large enough to supply plenty for present use and plenty also for winter storage.

The big fruit news right now is the 1939-1940 citrus crop. The citrus season started off this month with a boom. The markets are going to have lots of grapefruit and also lots of winter and spring oranges. The citrus season was a little slow getting underway but from now on plenty of grapefruit and oranges will be coming in.

The grapefruit crop this year isn't quite so large as the record crop of 1938, but it is bigger than any previous year. Almost half the crop now going to market comes from Florida. Forty percent of it comes from Texas. And the re-

maining 10 percent comes from California and Arizona.

Here's the way the grapefruit calendar runs in Florida and Texas. Florida ships the most grapefruit to market from mid-November to mid-May. The peak months for Florida grapefruit are March and April. Texas ships the most grapefruit from the middle of November through the month of March with March as the big month. So with both Florida and Texas concentrating on March, that's the month to expect bargains in grapefruit.

Now as for oranges this winter, the crop coming to market from October to May will be only a little smaller than last year's record orange crop. That means a lot of oranges in the market again this year. About half of these oranges will come from Florida and about 40 percent from California. The California orange crop this year won't be up to average size but the Florida crop promises to be the largest on record.

The other new fruit crop that comes to market at this season is cranberries. The 1939 cranberry crop will be about 40 percent bigger than last year's crop. That figures out to be about 190 thousand more barrels of cranberries going to market this year. The experts don't go on to figure how many more jars of jelly and dishes of cranberry sauce will go on dinner tables this year, but 190 thousand barrels ought to mean plenty for everybody who likes cranberries.

Here's some news about potatoes. Not so many white potatoes in the late fall crop. Unfavorable growing conditions in September brought production down about 5 million bushels. The big months for harvesting and selling the late potato crop are October and November.

The sweetpotato crop is large, however, though it is not so large as last year's crop. The biggest month for sweetpotatoes is October. After that supplies fall off seasonally until June when the sweetpotato season ends.

Here's news for anyone who likes baked beans and bean soup. This year we'll have only about 5 percent fewer beans than we had last year. And last year dried beans made a record. Perhaps you noticed that the price of beans went up in September after the outbreak of trouble in Europe. Since then the wholesale price of navy beans has dropped. But up to October 10 retail prices of beans showed only a very slight falling off.

Butter and egg supplies get smaller and smaller at this time of year. November is the month when butter supplies are lowest, and December is the month for the fewest eggs. This year the markets will still have a good deal of butter, even in November. And many more eggs will be selling than last year.

Now for the poultry news. October, November and December are the big months for poultry in the market. A lot more poultry will be for sale this year than last. Turkeys especially are going to be plentiful. October, November and December are usually the months when a good deal of poultry goes into storage for sale during the first half of the new year when fresh poultry is not so plentiful.

That finishes the food news for today, except for the list of official surplus foods. The surplus foods are: butter, eggs, raisins, pork, lard, dried prunes, onions, dry beans, apples, fresh pears, fresh snap beans, wheat flour, whole wheat flour and cornmeal. These foods are so abundant that many housewives will find them good buys in their local markets.

And that really finishes the food-shopping tips for today.

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